



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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90288

Executive Council embraces environmental issue, endorses Browning's Gulf statement

by James Solheim

The potential for a war in the Persian Gulf and the continuing threat to the earth's environment were major items on the agenda of the church's Executive Council meeting in New York, November 2-5.

In what was otherwise a routine meeting, members of the Executive Council responded enthusiastically to the report from the recent Presiding Bishop's Consultation on the Environment and Sustainable Development. In a resolution, the council expressed its appreciation for the consultation's "linkage of the issues of environment and those of economic justice" and asked the presiding bishop to appoint a committee to shape a response for action at the council's January meeting in Georgia.

There is a worldwide consensus on the dimensions of the environmental crisis and a universal response by all segments of society--except religion, Dean James Morton of New York's Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine told council members. "Where is organized religion on this issue?" asked Morton, a participant in the consultation and an environmental activist on the international level (see ENS 90033).

How can the Episcopal Church, which has shown such prophetic leadership on other issues, be "totally invisible and mute" on what is "essentially a religious issue?" added Morton. "There is an unbelievable opportunity for real leadership by our church on this issue." Morton called for "immediate commitment" by the church, including appointment of a task force, a standing commission on environment, and a national staff position. Morton suggested that the environmental issue could be a "healing" one at next summer's General Convention, where issues of human sexuality are expected to receive a great deal of attention.

"I don't want the 1991 convention to be known only as the convention on sexuality but also for a creation response," said Canon Roswell Moore of California.

Scott Evans, who chairs the subcommittee on environment of the Standing Commission on Human Affairs, which will consider the report at General Convention, joined Morton in urging the church's involvement in the issue. She said there is "grassroots energy building on this issue" and deputies to General Convention will be disappointed to discover that the national church

has not provided more leadership. In offering what she said was "a report card" on how the church has handled the issue at the national level, she was very critical about how little attention the issue has received. This was "not your finest hour," she scolded, but added that there is still time to "place this embarrassing performance behind us."

Council considers Gulf crisis

The Executive Committee commended the presiding bishop's October 5 statement on the Persian Gulf crisis (see ENS 90258) and agreed that the crisis should be seen in its "larger historical context," especially the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, "in which we continue to support an independent Palestinian state and security for Israel." The resolution urged President George Bush "not to commit any long-term U.S. military presence in the Middle East beyond the period of this crisis." The council also called on Americans "to reflect on the reasons and motives for our nation's involvement in the crisis, especially our motive for unimpeded access to oil, which feeds our overly consumptive lifestyle. We challenge ourselves and the church to use this moment to rethink our national priorities and our way of life."

The council also expressed its disappointment that a dispute between the President and Congress "led to the failure to enact a civil rights bill this year and to adopt important new provisions to prevent discrimination in employment." It urged passage of a new bill "early in the next session" of Congress.

Planning process receives boost

"I'm excited by how far we have come--this has great possibilities for the future of the church," the presiding bishop told the council as it considered the next steps in the planning and development process first discussed by the council a year ago.

"We have come to the point where we talk about discerning the church's mission," Canon Robert Tharp of East Tennessee told council members. Tharp, who chairs the Planning and Development Committee, reported on conversations with Episcopal Church Center staff and then invited small groups of council members to "model the discernment process." "The purpose is to get us inside our own faith journeys," observed Bishop Rustin Kimsey of Eastern Oregon, who wrote a discernment statement he shared with the council.

While most reports from the small groups were positive, there was still evidence of impatience and anxiety that the process is being imposed, that its direction is not clear enough yet. "We have spent significant time at four

meetings now but without significant progress," one group said. "Why aren't we doing something instead of inventing a process?"

Budget process is working

In his introduction to the report of the Administration/Budget/Finance Committee, Vincent Currie of Florida said that "the budget process is working and will continue to improve." In presenting a balanced budget of \$44,487,000--equal to about two and one-half B-1 bombers--the church's treasurer, Ellen Cooke, warned the council that the church is going to feel the impact of economic uncertainty at all levels. While giving at the local level continues to increase (\$11.11 per household per week in 1989), dioceses are receiving less from parishes, she observed. "It's not that total revenues are less. For a variety of reasons we are using them in different ways."

Cooke said the 1991 budget is based on 95 percent of assessments and represents a "minimal increase in expenses."

In other action:

- Council member Joyce McConnell from Seattle received enthusiastic applause for the report of her "spiritual experience" at last summer's Episcopal Youth Event in Montana. She described it as a time of "a lot of love, a lot of listening, and a lot of sharing through the Holy Spirit...a glimpse into the kingdom and how we are living it."
- Canon Burgess Carr, new director of Episcopal Migration Ministries, reported on the "cruel and tragic stalemate" in Liberia, where half the people are now refugees. He described the suffering he observed on a recent trip to the area, where refugees were unloaded in containers from a ship since they could not walk. He reported that church-related Cuttington College was closed and is being used as a training center by rebel forces led by Charles Taylor.
- The council passed a resolution thanking the presiding bishop for his leadership and his attempts to promote dialogue in the church.
- Michael Ingham, the ecumenical officer for the Anglican Church of Canada, said the presiding bishop's leadership goes beyond the Episcopal Church because "tensions and polarization are not confined to the United States but are common throughout the Anglican Communion." He reminded the council that the Native peoples have never abandoned their way of living in harmony with nature and they can help the rest of us with environmental issues.

In a conversation with the press following the conclusion of the council meeting, Bishop Browning said there is still considerable confusion in the church on the issues of human sexuality. "I still believe that we have the grace to come to some consensus on this issue--and I have faith in this church and its possibility to find that consensus." Browning repeated his conviction that such a consensus cannot be legislated. "We are looking for God's will in this issue, and no one has a clear handle on that truth." His role as presiding bishop is to encourage dialogue and avoid polarization in the search for consensus. He said he was "willing to take that risk, no matter what my personal opinion" is on the issues of human sexuality.

90289

Arizona Episcopalians vow to continue battle for Martin Luther King holiday

by Nan Ross

PHOENIX, Ariz., November 7--Following the narrow defeat of a public referendum to create a Martin Luther King/Civil Rights Day, Arizona Bishop Joseph T. Heistand said he and other supporters "have no intention of giving up the struggle" to see that their state gets the holiday.

"We are deeply disappointed in the outcome," Heistand said after the issue was defeated by about 12,000 votes, or less than 2 percent of the total. "We carried the three most populous counties, but we obviously failed in the rural areas."

Heistand, who serves on a committee of local religious and business leaders that campaigned for the holiday, said, "I don't believe the majority of citizens of Arizona are racist; I believe they stand for justice and civil rights for all people. And it is my hope they can, working with the legislature of Arizona, pass a Martin Luther King/Civil Rights holiday."

Heistand noted that if the referendum had passed, "we would have been the only state in the union where the voters themselves declared a public holiday."

Opponents of the holiday, led by former Gov. Evan Meacham, who was removed from office by impeachment in 1989, obtained enough signatures to put the issue on the November 6 general election ballot. This was a response

to the Arizona Legislature's passage of a King Day measure last May.

The Rev. Bill Jamieson, a deacon at Phoenix's Trinity Cathedral who has campaigned alongside Heistand for the holiday, said a report about the Super Bowl just two days before the election "didn't help." The report, attributed to the National Football League (NFL), said Phoenix's hosting of the 1993 Super Bowl would be in jeopardy if voters turned down the measure. After the election, the NFL said the rumor was true.

"Nobody likes to be blackmailed or threatened," Jamieson said. "Even though our religious and civic leaders responded by assembling to emphasize the issue is first a moral one, that report definitely hurt us at the end. The Super Bowl issue shifted the emphasis away from the real issue--doing what is right because it is right."

Although he was not prepared to share details, Heistand said he has already begun to plan strategy on how to keep alive the plans for a holiday honoring King.

In a comment from New York, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said he was "terribly disappointed that the referendum was defeated." In his statement, he said: "When I visited with members of the Arizona legislature last winter to support the passage of the successful bill on the King Holiday, I said that I was not issuing threats about not coming to Arizona. I came to say that I believed that they were confronting a moral issue of deep significance--and that is racism. Dr. King brought to us a message of what this country could be if we were able to find racial equality. Observing a holiday in his name goes deeper than honoring him. It reminds us of who we must be as a non-racist society."

In announcing that the church will hold its General Convention in Phoenix next summer despite the defeat, Browning's statement continued: "The Episcopal Church will go to Phoenix. While we cannot ignore or condone the results of the referendum, I believe that by working with people of good faith who are in Arizona, we can come and together make a vigorous witness for the dignity of all God's people--and against the evils of racism."

Browning made a special trip to Phoenix last spring, at the invitation of Heistand, to lobby legislators and community leaders. At that time he said that the issue was "an international issue and a deeply moral one. What Arizona does with it reflects on America."

Heistand credited Browning's visit with helping to pass a bill last May creating the holiday--before an opposition movement successfully placed a referendum on yesterday's ballot.

--Nan Ross is director of communication for the Diocese of Arizona.

90290

Diocese of Alaska joins Indians over struggle against further oil development

The Diocese of Alaska has jumped into the center of a fiercely emotional debate pitting oil development interests against the cultural survival of Gwich'in Indian communities and the vital lands at the core of a fragile ecosystem.

During its annual convention on October 5 the diocese voted overwhelmingly on a voice vote to support the Gwich'in Indians of northern Alaska in their struggle to prevent oil development in a portion of the nine-million acre Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

"The Alaska diocese's resolution ties in perfectly with our church's emerging initiative on the environment that will be coming to the 1991 General Convention," said Owanah Anderson, staff officer for Indian ministries of the Episcopal Church.

At the center of the dispute is a 1.5-million-acre tract of land along the northern coastline of Alaska that oil industry experts insist currently has the greatest oil-producing potential of any land in the United States.

The tract, known as the 1002 area, is a portion of the refuge that was set aside by Congress in 1980 for possible future oil development, pending studies by the Department of the Interior evaluating its energy potential and the environmental impact of development.

In the spring of 1987 a controversial report prepared by the department recommended immediate leasing of the 1002 area to oil companies. Congress has not yet approved the department recommendation.

The 1002 area is the biological wellspring of an enormous ecosystem. Interwoven with tiny communities of Gwitch'in Indians are wildlife populations including polar and grizzly bear, snow geese, wolf, musk-oxen, and the largest community of all--a herd of more than 180,000 Porcupine caribou.

The caribou's 96,000-square-mile range in northern Alaska is totally dependent on the flatlands of the 1002 tract for a critical, two-month, annual period of calving and nursing. Environmental biologists insist that the construction of oil-producing facilities would destroy the caribou herd and cripple the larger ecosystem.

The survival of the Gwitch'in Indians is intimately related to the caribou, according to local leaders. "To kill the caribou is to kill the Indian," said

Jonathan Solomon, an Athabascan Indian leader. Solomon contends that caribou provide subsistence for 7,000 Indians, and that to open the ANWR for oil exploration will destroy a 10,000-year-old way of life.

"The context for our decision was the declining productivity in nearby Prudhoe Bay and a desire to look for other sources of oil," said Alaskan Bishop George Harris. "Many politicians were saying that the refuge is another possible oil field. However, the *Valdez* oil spill gave us a more jaundiced view about the reliability of the oil industry to protect the environment," Harris said.

"This is a simple issue. We have the right to continue our Gwich'in way of life," said Sarah James, a Gwich'in leader and a member of Bishop Rowe Memorial Church in Arctic Village. "We are a caribou people. We still do caribou dance, sing caribou song, wear the hide, use bone for tools, and tell the story," she said.

"Caribou is how we get from one year to another," James continued. "Oil [facilities] in their calving and nursery grounds would hurt the caribou and could destroy our culture and way of life."

"In this case, there is an immediate threat to the way of life of the Gwitch'in people, even their survival, in order to serve the inflated lifestyle of those who live far away," said the Rev. Brian Grieves, staff officer for peace and justice ministries of the Episcopal Church. "Environmental concerns are connected to economic and justice concerns."

Harris said that reaction to the diocese's stand on the oil issue has ranged from "dismay on the part of those whose livelihood is dependent on oil development" to "overwhelming gratitude" on the part of Native Alaskans. "The church has an obligation to speak on justice issues for those whose voices are likely not to be heard," he said.

--by Jeffrey Penn

90291

Episcopalian joins peace delegation to Iraq, returns with four hostages

by Jerry Hames

A interfaith peace and witness delegation, which included an Episcopal priest, has returned from Iraq with four hostages and a belief that dialogue and negotiation can avert a war that would engulf the Middle East.

The Rev. James Lewis, peace and justice officer for the Diocese of North Carolina, said at a press conference in New York, October 27, that the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), an interfaith pacifist organization that has responded to crises since it was founded during World War I, initiated the trip as the beginning of a process that could lead to a permanent peace presence by volunteers in the region.

Although many European and Scandinavian peace delegations have entered Iraq, the FOR delegation was the first U.S. group. Lewis said the organization hopes to send other teams to the region with badly needed medicine and food.

Other FOR delegates echoed the need for dialogue and negotiation.

"It is of utmost urgency that discussions begin at the highest levels of government to forestall a war that would not only be disastrous for those in the line of fire, but for the entire Mideast and indeed the world," said C. Douglas Hostetter, executive secretary of FOR, who led the visit.

"We heard them [the Iraqis] say: 'It's time to talk,'" said the Rev. Mary Jensen, a Lutheran pastor from California. "They said there must be no embargo on dialogue," she said.

The 18-member delegation visited Jordan and Iraq, speaking with government representatives, religious leaders, and 20 U.S. hostages. "Most of those we saw, while they are under great stress, are still hopeful and in good spirits," Jensen said.

Lewis was elated that the group was successful in gaining the release of four Americans, but said he was disappointed that he was not allowed to meet with the Rev. Michael Jones, a Church of England priest who is being held with his wife at a strategic military installation near Baghdad.

Jones and his wife were taken under guard to Iraq from Kuwait where he had served as chaplain. The couple, accompanied by heavy security, was seen on one occasion at a service at St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad.

"We offered to be blindfolded if we could be taken to where Jones is

being held, but this was not acceptable to the authorities," Lewis said. He added that former British Prime Minister Edward Heath, with whom he met in Baghdad, was also unable to speak with Jones or secure his release with the 70 to 80 other hostages he took back to Britain.

Hostetter said the delegation's visit was intended to avert war, break what he called "an embargo of silence," and provide direct humanitarian aid to detainees and Iraqis.

The FOR delegation took a ton of medical supplies and packets of letters to the hostages from their families. It also sought the release of the more seriously ill among the hostages. Two in the delegation, a Muslim and Roman Catholic Bishop Michael Kenney of Alaska, remained in Baghdad and eventually flew to Amman, Jordan, on November 3 with four men--Michael Barmer, 49, of Alexandria, Louisiana; Randall Trinh, 49, of Hacienda Heights, California; Dr. Abdul Khanji, 50, a physician from Glencoe, Illinois; and Raymond Gales, a diplomat from the U.S. embassy in Kuwait.

U.S. diplomats in Baghdad said the four were selected for release because they were on an embassy list of older or sick men.

90292

Orlando cathedral reverses decision on AIDS benefit concert; gay chorus invited

The Episcopal cathedral in Orlando, Florida, has reversed a controversial decision to cancel an AIDS benefit concert that was to include music by the Orlando Gay Chorus. The cathedral has now offered to cosponsor an AIDS benefit concert on January 20, 1991, that may include the gay chorus.

"The real reason we changed our mind is that we want to express our loving support to the community by the church," said the Very Rev. Harry Sherman, dean of the Cathedral Church of St. Luke. "We are a loving church and not exercising judgment against people. God loves us all. The atmosphere that we created was not a loving one. I'm sorry that happened."

The simmering controversy erupted several weeks ago when a benefit concert sponsored by the American Guild of Organists (AGO) was canceled. The marathon 11-hour concert would have included a 23-minute performance by the Orlando Gay Chorus.

Although Sherman denied that the participation of a gay chorus was the reason for the cancellation, members of the chorus and the AGO believed otherwise. A story in the *Orlando Sentinel* reported that Sherman had said that "it's not proper at this time for a homosexual group to promote its own cause by offering itself to benefit AIDS." Sherman insisted that the *Sentinel* quote had distorted his views.

In an interview shortly after the cancellation, chorus director Charles Callahan said that the chorus did not intend to make a political statement in its appearance at the benefit. "Our whole purpose for existence is excellence in choral music. Period," he said.

David Schuler, president of the chorus, agreed. "Our purpose was music. It was clearly appropriate for us to offer our music for this benefit. It's unfortunate that biases get in the way."

Sherman reported that the cathedral had received about 40 letters from people across the country who had heard of the earlier cancellation. He denied, however, that the decision to reschedule the concert was the result of pressure. "This is not a pressure decision. It's a decision of love--I really feel that way," Sherman said.

"By opening up the church, he's keeping in line with [what] other Episcopal churches in the United States are doing," said David Schuler, president of the Orlando Gay Chorus, in a newspaper interview.

"I thought it was a welcome and needed change of mind--an about-face, shall we say," said Callahan.

Callahan reported that the chorus would meet to consider the new offer by the cathedral "later this month. The cathedral has made a positive gesture, and I hope the chorus will take the opportunity to reach out to the community as well," he said.

"We can now get back to our primary objective--music and raising funds for AIDS," said David McCain, publicity chairman of the AGO. "I'm very pleased to know that the cathedral has reconsidered this situation and, moreover, that they welcome the inclusion of the Orlando Gay Chorus."

--by Jeffrey Penn

90293

Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief announces grants of \$667,000

At its October 30 meeting in New York, the board of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief announced grants totaling \$666,974, bringing the total for the year to more than \$2.5 million.

There were no requests for major grants for disaster relief, although three grants continued support for previous relief efforts: a grant of \$100,000 for relief efforts in South Carolina and one of \$200,000 for rehabilitation work in the Virgin Islands in the wake of Hurricane Hugo, and another \$60,434 for earthquake relief in north central Philippines.

Most grants from the fund tend to be small grants to encourage development projects aimed at making people more independent and self-reliant, according to Bishop Furman Stough, the fund's director. Stough noted an increase in requests to fund AIDS programs, both in the United States and abroad.

As an example, Stough pointed to a \$10,000 grant to a program in Uganda that helps AIDS patients and their families. The grant will assist a diocesan program that trains volunteers and clergy trying to work in the midst of continuing civil chaos and an AIDS epidemic that affects an estimated 1.5 million Ugandans.

A domestic grant of \$5,000 was given to the Northwest AIDS Foundation in Seattle to assist in providing housing for people living with AIDS. Short-term transitional housing is provided by the foundation, especially for those with low incomes, and the grant will increase the number of "bednights" available.

Social ministry focus of most grants

A majority of the grants from the fund focus on social ministry with people who are experiencing major problems in their lives.

A grant of \$15,000 will support a therapeutic group home for teenaged girls in Mississippi, for example, providing a new beginning for those who are victims of abuse or neglect. Halfway around the world, the school-aged children of Onyang City in South Korea who are trying to support their families will be helped by The Mission of Love, a social outreach program that provides shelter, education, and counseling services.

In Liberia children who have been orphaned and injured by the civil war desperately need help. A grant of \$10,000 will help provide shelter, clothing,

and medical attention for children until the war ends and the nation is able to rebuild.

War has also affected the health and safety of people in other parts of the world. In the drought-stricken area of Eritrea in Ethiopia, for example, villagers are being trained to drill, operate, repair, and maintain wells with the help of a \$7,529 grant to an ongoing water supply development program.

In Guatemala refugees from conflict are returning from neighboring Mexico. Under a \$11,000 grant from the Presiding Bishop's Fund, communities comprised of repatriates are able to grind corn with machines, so that extra time can be spent in efforts to support families.

The rural poor in North Carolina receive help from the Shepherd's Staff, an ecumenical service ministry that provides affordable housing. A \$10,000 grant supports the salary of the project director, a retired Episcopal priest described by Stough as a "dynamo."

"So many of these innovative programs depend on strong leadership," Stough observed as he looked over the list of grants. "It is one of the first things we look for as we sift through applications for millions of dollars of good, legitimate requests for help."

One of the most unusual requests funded this time was a small grant to enable participation in a fact-finding team sent to Russia to assess the damage from nuclear fall-out following the accident at Chernobyl four years ago. The team, under leadership of the World Council of Churches (WCC), visited the Minsk area last summer, and the WCC plans to launch a major appeal based on the team's report.

(A full list of grants is available from the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.)

90294

Bishop Lyman Ogilby, 'one of the great missionary bishops of the church,' dead at 68

When Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning announced the death of Bishop Lyman Ogilby at the recent Executive Council meeting in New York, he called him "one of the great missionary bishops of the church." Ogilby died at a hospital in Spokane, Washington, November 3, after attending a

consecration. He was 68 years old.

Born in Connecticut and educated at Hamilton College, Ogilby served with the U.S. Navy in the Pacific before attending Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He graduated and was ordained a deacon in 1949 and a priest the following year.

Ogilby's ministry began as a chaplain and teacher at the Brent School in the Philippines. He was elected suffragan bishop of the Philippines in 1952 and bishop in 1957. He resigned in 1967 to make way for the first Filipino bishop.

He left the Philippines to become bishop coadjutor of the Missionary District of South Dakota and became bishop in 1970--but resigned later that year so the district could elect its own bishop.

In 1971 he was appointed assistant bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania and was elected coadjutor in 1973 and became diocesan bishop in 1974, serving until his retirement in 1987.

Despite his failing health, Ogilby assisted with episcopal visitations in the dioceses of Western Michigan, Bethlehem (PA), Maryland, and Washington (D.C.).

Bishop Barbara Harris of Massachusetts, who was ordained to the priesthood and episcopate by Ogilby, said that "the church has lost one of the strongest voices for justice and compassion. He was a warm, loving human being with a tremendous zest for life. The joy he expressed in his ministry was contagious."

During Executive Council, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning paid tribute to his friend's tenacity, describing Ogilby's participation in the Spokane consecration even though he required oxygen. "Lyman was also the only member of the House of Bishops who never needed a microphone," Browning added in noting that Ogilby was famous for his booming voice and strong opinions.

The Ogilby family released a statement after the bishop's death: "Just before his death, Lyman Ogilby reminded us that God needs helpers to carry out his mission and that we are the feet and hands of the cosmic Christ. We are needed to work for justice and peace. We ask that you remember this as you celebrate his life. This living memorial will be as diverse as the people who have been touched by Lyman Ogilby. Let your contribution to this mission reflect your abilities and talents."

90295

Plight of refugees stressed at first annual Refugee Day

Three refugees brought to the United States by Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) were among seven people honored for outstanding achievement and humanitarian service at the first annual Refugee Day on October 30 sponsored by the U.S. State Department.

The award presentation completed a day-long series of addresses and discussions by leaders of national and international organizations to more than 200 professionals working with refugees.

Jesus Garcia, 33, fled from his native Cuba in a boat with 12 others in 1980. Today, he teaches piano and voice at an arts school in Miami and is organist and choirmaster at Todos los Santos Episcopal Church.

Dagne Toka, 29, and his wife, Zahra Yusuf, 21, arrived in Springfield, Massachusetts, last February from Ethiopia by way of a refugee camp in Somalia.

Both Toka, who spent five years in jail as a political dissident, and Yusuf have had family members who have been killed or imprisoned for speaking against the Marxist policies of the Mengistu government.

Toka said his decision to flee to Somalia when he discovered he was under surveillance by informants was a difficult one. "I wanted to live with my family, my people, but I feared for my life," said Toka. He also told about being tortured in jail.

Toka currently has two jobs, as a full-time mechanic at a car dealership and a part-time parking attendant; his wife has a part-time job at a nursing home and is attending classes at a career development institute.

Donna Ashton of Springfield, Massachusetts, who helped to bring the Muslim couple to the United States through the EMM and a local ecumenical committee, said she nominated them because their story of escape from persecution was typical of many political refugees who find their lives endangered.

The EMM is one of 13 agencies through which the State Department places refugees.

Number of refugees increasing

In a proclamation to mark Refugee Day, President George Bush acknowledged that, despite the efforts to assist in resettlement, the population of refugees in the world has increased dramatically, doubling to more than 15

million persons in the past decade.

Millions of others are displaced by war, famine, or civil unrest but are not regarded as refugees, according to Jewel Lafontant-Mankarious, ambassador-at-large and U.S. coordinator for refugee affairs, who hosted Refugee Day.

Lafontant-Mankarious announced that 131,000 refugees would be accepted in the United States during 1991 for permanent resettlement--which represents an increase from 122,000 refugees in 1990.

Speaker after speaker, including Canon Burgess Carr, director of EMM, cited the soaring statistics of the refugee problem caused by famine and fighting across the African continent, in Afghanistan, and the throughout the Middle East.

The plight of Palestinian refugees was underscored by Giorgio Giacomelli, commissioner-general of UNRWA, the relief agency of the United Nations established in 1949, who said 300,000 more Palestinians who lived in Kuwait have now been displaced.

"The invasion of Kuwait has been a personal catastrophe for Palestinians, many of them becoming refugees for a second time," he said. "Most have returned to Jordan or the West Bank, but with very little or no money,"

He said 3,000 additional children have been placed in UNRWA schools since the Iraqi invasion, complicating an already difficult issue that has remained unresolved for too long.

--by Jerry Hames

90296

The Rev. Joan Campbell nominated to head National Council of Churches

The Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, 58, executive director of the U.S. Office of the World Council of Churches, has been nominated general secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC). An ordained minister of both the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the American Baptist Churches, she would be the first ordained woman to head the organization in its 40-year history. The nomination now goes to the NCC General Board

meeting in Portland, Oregon, in mid-November when the election will be held.

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning, a member of the 29-member selection committee that nominated Campbell, said he "couldn't be more delighted." He said Campbell has his "full and enthusiastic support. She is a sensitive, creative and supremely competent individual. She is extremely knowledgeable about the national and international issues with which the church must deal. And she has both administrative skill and a vision to embrace the future."

Campbell's "theological competence and ecumenical vision, experience, and commitment--including a passion to seek out and nurture leadership for the ecumenical movement in the years ahead" were cited by Margaret Sonnenday of St. Louis, a United Methodist who chaired the search committee.

In responding to the nomination, Campbell said the strength of the council was in its member churches. "These richly diverse churches have congregations in every neighborhood in this nation," she observed. "The council therefore is a network that touches the lives of millions of Americans. The leaders of these churches have committed themselves to build community together. I believe that the combined energy of the churches in the NCC will continue to be a moral force within our society."

The election comes at a crucial time for the council. It has just completed a major restructure that consolidates 11 previous units into four, and it is electing new leadership within the units. The last few years have been contentious, since the abrupt resignation under fire of the previous general secretary, Arie Brouwer, and subsequent attempts to rebuild a council more responsive to its 32 member churches.

The general secretary is the chief executive officer of the council and shares responsibility with the NCC president as chief spokesperson and interpreter in the international ecumenical arena.



news briefs

90297

Christmas service will respond to AIDS crisis

Gold stars and red hearts representing Michigan citizens who have died or are living with AIDS will once again decorate a Christmas tree in a Detroit Episcopal church. Christ Church in Detroit will sponsor a Christmas celebration for people who care about people living with AIDS. The December 13 evening service is described as "Detroit's major ecumenical Christmas service" by planners of the event. Representatives of seven denominations and a variety of AIDS organizations will participate in the sixth annual service. Gifts for home-bound or hospitalized persons living with AIDS will be placed beneath the Christmas tree. An offering at the service will be given to the Bishop's Fund for AIDS, a fund sponsored by the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan.

Australian bishops will meet to discuss women's ordination

The acting Anglican primate of Australia, Bishop Keith Rayner, has asked the country's 23 Anglican bishops to meet on November 19 in an effort to decide whether individual dioceses have the right to unilaterally ordain women as priests. No national church decision has yet been made on the issue. The Anglican bishop of the Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn is proceeding with plans to ordain women next February.

New hymn honoring Martin Luther King dedicated in Atlanta

A hymn in honor of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was dedicated on All Souls' Day, November 2, 1990, in the Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, Georgia. During a requiem Eucharist for the homeless of Atlanta who had died during the previous year, the hymn, "Blessed Martin, Pastor, Prophet," was sung for the first time. A framed copy of the hymn was

presented to the Rev. Bernice King, daughter of the late Dr. King and Mrs. Coretta King, by the Rev. Canon Harold Lewis, staff officer for black ministries of the Episcopal Church, who wrote the words to the hymn. Dr. Carl Haywood, professor of music at Norfolk State University and organist and choirmaster at Grace Episcopal Church, Norfolk, wrote the music and accompanied the hymn on the cathedral's organ. The hymn will be included in the forthcoming edition of *Lift Every Voice and Sing II: An African-American Hymnal*, jointly sponsored by the Episcopal Commission for Black Ministries and the Standing Commission on Church Music of the Episcopal Church, scheduled for publication in 1991.

Poland moves toward abortion ban

The Polish legislature, spurred by pressure from the Roman Catholic Church, is on the verge of banning abortion despite public opinion polls indicating a majority of Poles oppose the proposal. The Polish Senate approved the bill by a 3-to-1 margin in September, but the lower house set aside action until after the November 25 presidential election. The major presidential candidates--Lech Walesa, the Solidarity chairman, and Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki--have said that as practicing Roman Catholics they will not oppose the church's position against abortion. Under the legislation, doctors who perform abortions would face a jail term of up to two years. "It's all so ironic," said Jolanta Plakwicz of the emerging Polish Feminist Association. "So many women were...part of the fight for freedom in Poland. And now it seems that freedom, that victory, is not for women." More than 90 percent of Poland's 39 million people are Roman Catholics. The estimated yearly number of abortions in Poland is more than 600,000, with birth control methods not readily available to most Poles.

Civil Rights Act of 1990 is defeated

President Bush's veto of the Civil Rights Act of 1990 elicited frustration and disappointment among interfaith religious leaders who viewed the measure as a necessary safeguard for minority rights in the workplace. The Bush veto was sustained when the Senate fell one vote short of overriding it on October 24. "It was a badly needed piece of legislation that was projected by the Bush administration as a quota bill," said Dr. Kenyon Burke, associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches' Division of Church and Society. Bush and a number of business groups had argued that businesses would be pressured into instituting quota systems to shield themselves against potential job discrimination lawsuits. Supporters of the bill argued that last year's Supreme Court decisions had weakened the ability of employees to

prove bias, making new legislation all the more urgent. The religious leaders promised to redouble their efforts for the passage of suitable civil rights legislation in 1991.

Service at Atlanta Cathedral honors the homeless

The Episcopal Cathedral of St. Philip held a service honoring the 100 homeless persons who died in the city of Atlanta during 1990, calling attention to the continuing plight of homeless people in the city. The requiem Eucharist included intercessions for the deceased as well as those listed by municipal authorities merely as "unknown," "unclaimed," or "an unborn, unnamed child." In an interview, the Rev. George Brandt, canon for outreach and community ministries at the cathedral, said that Atlanta is in the midst of "a lot of ferment right now.... With the rush to the [1996] Olympics, there's a concern among some of us that the homeless will be badly treated or abused even more than they are now. We're calling attention to the need for affordable housing and to our concern that the homeless not be swept under the rug to keep them out of sight."

Salvador church leaders fast for peace

Anglican, Lutheran, and Baptist church leaders in San Salvador joined in a fast for peace, October 13-15. They urged both government and antigovernment forces to "engage in real negotiations for the finishing of the [civil] war" that has ravaged the Central American country for the past 10 years. United Nations-sponsored talks between the warring parties are currently stalled.

UCC board urges universal health insurance

The domestic mission unit of the United Church of Christ (UCC) endorsed a proposal calling for universal health insurance in the United States. The statement approved by the church's Board for Homeland Ministries noted that over 100 million people in the United States have either no health insurance or "inadequate insurance," that Medicaid covers only 40 percent of the country's low-income population, and that health care costs are the primary cause of personal bankruptcies in the nation. In issuing the call at its annual meeting on October 29, the board urged the 1.6-million-member denomination to make health care a top priority. "Health care is a justice issue," said Reuben Tendai, a church spokesman. The proposal will be offered for adoption next June at the UCC's 18th General Synod.

Romania accused of Eastern Orthodox bias

The US-based Reformed Ecumenical Council (REC) has charged that the Romanian government ministry of religion is favoring Eastern Orthodoxy at the expense of Roman Catholics and evangelicals. The REC reported that evangelicals have been prevented from establishing independent publishing houses. The religion ministry is headed by an Eastern Orthodox who was a political prisoner under the former Communist regime. Eastern Orthodoxy is the main form of Christianity in Romania.

Merger creates INTERFAITH IMPACT

The governing boards of National IMPACT and Interfaith Action for Economic Justice overwhelmingly voted to merge during a joint meeting on October 9. The name of the new organization, to begin operations in January, is INTERFAITH IMPACT for Justice and Peace. The Washington, DC-based interreligious body will continue the work begun by its parent groups in a number of public policy areas, including domestic hunger programs, foreign policy, the environment, and equality for women and children. Gretchen Eick and the Rev. Arthur Keys, Jr., are serving as INTERFAITH IMPACT's co-directors. The group's board of directors will meet for the first time in December.

All-German Evangelical unity expected in 1991

The eastern and western Evangelical (Lutheran, Reformed, and United) Landeskirchen (provincial churches) in Germany have announced plans to complete their reunion in November 1991, in conjunction with the election of a new council for the Evangelical Church in Germany. The reunited church will include 24 provincial churches.

Ecumenical college student gathering planned

An estimated 400 Episcopalians are expected to be among the 4,000 college students, faculty, chaplains, and other interested people in the first national ecumenical gathering of student Christian organizations. The conference, formally titled "Celebrate! Many Gifts, One Spirit," will be held at the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky, December 28, 1990-January 1, 1991. Over 100 workshops will be offered, as well as gala dinners and a New Year's Eve banquet and dance. Dr. David Rowe, director of operations for Habitat for Humanity, an ecumenical housing ministry for low-income families, will be the conference's main speaker. Periods have been set aside for each denomination to meet separately, and the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, suffragan bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts, and Dr. Charles Price,

professor emeritus of systematic theology at Virginia Theological Seminary, will contribute to the Episcopal portion of the program. The cost, including lodging, lunch, and dinner, is \$165, based on four-person occupancy, with higher rates applying for triple, double, or single rooms. Registration forms and optional travel plans are available from any Episcopal campus minister or from the Rev. Nathaniel Porter, Episcopal Church Center, at (800) 334-7626, ext. 242. Some scholarship funding is available from most provinces.

PEOPLE

Muriel Boone, the granddaughter of the Rt. Rev. William J. Boone, the first Anglican bishop of Shanghai, China, died in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on September 23 at the age of 97. She authored *The Seed of the Church in China*, an account of her grandfather's ministry, published in 1973. The Episcopal Church sent Boone to China in 1837, and he served as bishop of Shanghai from 1844 to 1864. Muriel herself served as a Presbyterian missionary in China for 41 years, working mostly with women, children, and refugees in the rural south central part of the country. Her father and mother had also been missionaries in China, for the Episcopal and Congregational Churches. Muriel was born in Shanghai in 1893 during the reign of the last Chinese emperor.

Michael Cuddy is the new legislative associate at the Episcopal Church's Washington Office. Cuddy, a native of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, was previously on the staff of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. He has an M.A. degree in international relations from Boston University.



news features

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The Presiding Bishop's Address from the Chair Executive Council of the Episcopal Church New York November 2, 1990

Let me begin our time together this morning by sharing a half dozen or so provocative thoughts, all gleaned from the life of our church in the last few weeks:

From Professor Robert Bellah, to our House of Bishops:

If religion is a purely private matter [as many people misguidedly suppose], and essentially a matter of subjective feeling, then one person's feelings are as valid as another--there is nothing objective against which to test them. Thus there can be no such thing as authority in religion. Indeed, to individualistic Americans there is little sense of valid authority in any sphere.... It is... an exacting discipline to try to be the church in a culture such as ours...[for]...it is...necessary to demonstrate, in the face of cultural skepticism, what a community of loyal and committed believers is really like.

From Dr. Elizabeth Templeton, also to the House of Bishops:

...[T]o be a person, in the image of the persons of the Trinity, is to be neither an individual nor a part of a collective. It is to be one who is irreplaceable to another, so that my identity is bound up with your identity, but not lost in it; and your identity is bound up with mine, but not lost in it. So that the particularity of each is sustained, even generated, by their relationships.

From the House of Bishops itself, a public statement:

We have been called to recognize that, no matter how deeply each of us may feel about homosexuality, there are other people of good faith who also take seriously the authority of Scripture and may conclude differently. We have been called to recognize that we cannot carry out our ministry if we each simply assume that we already have the whole truth and nothing at all to learn. We call on you to share our recognition of the inherent faithlessness of a closed mind, one that blocks God from illuminating old truths in a fresh way, from calling us to new understandings or from leading us into new ways of thinking.

From a consultation on the environment and sustainable development, in preparation for this meeting of Executive Council and for the General Convention:

We see in what is being called the "environmental crisis" a challenge of far greater proportion. *Environmental integrity and economic justice are inseparable.* Oppression of Earth's natural systems is intimately linked to exploitation of its poorest people. Abuse of God's handicraft is the direct result of the mindless pursuit of profit and addictions of consumption, primarily among the world's wealthiest. Neglect of land, sky and water reflects alienation of humans from one another.

From a statement I issued on the Persian Gulf crisis:

Have we not sent our young men and women to the Gulf, as our president has said, to "protect the American way of life"? But what way of life is it that allows the homeless and unemployed to huddle on our

streets and our inner cities to decay? Is it possible that the "American way of life"--unbridled consumption--has not become for many millions a "way of death," unendurable poverty? Let us examine our national priorities and our addiction to unnecessary consumption. Let us be the nation we imagine ourselves to be--a beacon to the world's poor, a standard-bearer for justice and peace.

Finally, and again from the House of Bishops, a pastoral on evangelism:

Evangelism begins with listening.... Jesus gives us the model in his own struggle to be present and listening to all whom he encountered.... We commend to the church the necessity of creating a prayerful environment for listening so that persons may be honored and welcomed, affirming diversity of expression and bonding to God in truth.

How have these very different threads come together for me? I would summarize them as follows: The crisis of authority in a deeply individualistic and consumerist culture. Personhood in the image of the Trinity. Living together and ministering to a broken world even in the brokenness of our own body. The inescapable unity of all the earth's creatures. Obedience to our Lord as first a matter of hearing and listening. The dangerous delusion of national omnipotence.

These are themes that speak to us all--particularly those of us charged with leadership in the church.

Two weeks from now, when you pray the collect "Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them," I hope you will apply that beautiful prayer not only to the Holy Scriptures, but also, perhaps, to what you have just heard. For if we do not come to understand, at the deepest levels of our being, the radically interdependent nature of our life together--as a church, as a nation, as a family of nations, as a planet and ecosystem--then, in a profoundly concrete way, we have no future.

Do you think I exaggerate? I think it is simple reality. If we are to lead, we must do so with legitimate authority. If we are to speak with such authority within our own household, it must be with the authority of those who, like Jesus, persuade, not merely manipulate. If we are to speak with authority to the world, we must first be seen to be a true community, where each member is heard and honored and cherished, where faith and love and respect are realities and not mere words.

Let's be straightforward. Suppose we performed an audit of our exercise of leadership, of the way we approach issues of substance. What would that

audit demonstrate? Would it demonstrate an unflagging concern for the common good? Would it show that we speak with integrity and honesty from within our own body? Would it show that we honor the Lord of the poor and the oppressed? Would it show that we act as faithful people who look to the future in hope? Would our audit, in a word, demonstrate the authority of the people of God?

Think about that with me for awhile as I reflect on three current issues in our life together. These are matters that affect not only our internal life as a Christian community; perhaps more important, they affect our ministry and our mission in the world. One is the issue of how we deal with homosexuality and how we relate to gay, lesbian, and other members of our community. Another is the issue of faithful witness regarding the environment and economic justice. Another is the crisis that confronts the global community in the Middle East.

There are of course many other matters of importance to our church. I hope that what I say about these three particular issues will spark your own reflections. That is what I always hope for as I address you at the beginning of each council meeting: that we take time to reflect together--to think and pray together--about issues of substance and urgency.

Many positive things happened when the House of Bishops took up the topic that is so much before our society and our church--that of homosexuality. Though we only spent a few brief hours on the subject, it was time well spent. Most important, I believe that the bishops have offered something of wisdom and substance to the church in the statement that was produced (which I believe you have all seen in the Episcopal News Service).

What did the bishops do? We agreed that the church is not in agreement on the subject of homosexuality. To some, that will sound like a typical Anglican waffle. I believe it is an honest confession of where we are as a church.

For the House of Bishops did not leave the matter there. The house wanted to model for the church how a body in deep disagreement, with firmly held opinions on all sides, could wrestle with a complicated issue and together produce positive pastoral guidance. I believe the bishops accomplished that.

I ask, how different is the House of Bishops from the church at large? The bishops have taken the high road, and it is my hope that the rest of the church will do so as well. If we are to speak with authority--both to our own people and to the larger community--then we must somehow begin as the bishops have begun: with honest sharing, sensitive listening, and forthright speaking. I am convinced that God is calling us to be more than we are, and I am convinced that God is faithful to all who follow that call.

Dear friends, the issue of the ordination of gays and lesbians is not going to be settled anytime soon. And, during our time of struggle, no one is likely to be entirely happy. We will have those who see that justice is not being done by our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters. We will have those who believe that what they see as sin according to Scripture is not being named as such. No one is going to be entirely happy or comfortable. But I remind you that we are not called to be comfortable. We are called to be faithful. To be faithful at this time in our life together, I believe, is, like Jacob at the Jabbok, to *wrestle*, to struggle. It is not seeking to vanquish the other side. It is not trying to legislate the problem away.

It will not surprise you to know that I am pressed for my opinion on this issue, as if that would win the day one way or the other. It will not surprise you to know that some--such as *Episcopalians United*--claim to have pinned me down. Don't believe everything you read; and certainly don't believe *Episcopalian United* claims in their fund-raising literature!

It is not that I don't have an opinion. It is that I have a larger vision--a vision of a faithful church, honestly seeking God's will, tending pastorally and lovingly to those in its own fellowship who are wounded in the struggle. That is my vision, and I will not let it grow dim. I will not cease to hold it before you.

In your packets for this meeting you received the report of the Presiding Bishop's Consultation on the Environment and Sustainable Development.

I think this is a remarkable and challenging report, and I am tremendously grateful to the participants in the consultation for the riches they have laid before us. (I must tell you that I found Bennett Sims's reflections on the relevance of Trinitarian theology to the environmental crisis to be particularly compelling.) The best way we can show our gratitude to the consultation's participants is to take the report seriously. I do, and I make the following remarks as a way of commending this document to you.

The core affirmation of the report for me is the assertion that environmental integrity and economic justice are one. Common sense--as well as theological reflection--tells you they cannot be separated. And yet, I am afraid that is what typically happens. Too often, to people who are suffering from economic injustice, talk about the environment sounds like a middle-class neurosis, a luxury, irrelevant to immediate concerns for survival. (Ask those who were in Seoul for the JPIC [Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation] Convocation; they will tell you precisely this.)

The report of the consultation therefore witnesses to the truth by pointing out the linkage between environmental destruction and the destruction of human communities by poverty and neglect. Our love of our natural home,

therefore, will always be demonstrated in part by our love for future generations--particularly for the little ones, the children in crisis.

But I wonder if the report goes much beyond this initial assertion. It seems to me not to have developed the connection between the environment and economic justice as much as it might have. This is important, because the Episcopal Church is poised to take national leadership in its particular approach to economic justice. When I visited the Lilly Endowment in September, I was amazed and gratified to learn that our adoption of the Michigan Plan places us at the forefront of U.S. churches' involvement in issues of economic justice. Let us not fail, then, to demonstrate similar leadership in the consistent linking of economic justice to concern for the larger environment.

The many recommendations of the report you will consider later. Take a critical look at them. Ask yourself, what is the unique role--if any--of the church in the environmental crisis? I have a feeling that role may be tied in with our missiology, our Anglican way of speaking about partnership in mission. Are we not in a special position to speak with authority about the reality of global community? About the global nature of issues? The JPIC process is bringing special insights to our thinking about mission. This is a golden opportunity to think and act creatively. Let us not lose such an opportunity:

One of the best things that happened at Fresno for me was the discussion on partners in crisis. We were able, I think, to listen sensitively to concerns from the Philippines and to respond in a helpful and healthy way. We were given up-to-date briefings on the situations in Kenya and Liberia, and we were led to think about how we can best be responsible partners when our partners are in distress or crisis.

Crisis abounds, as we learn every day.

The Liberian tragedy is yet unresolved, although I am afraid it has been eclipsed in our news media by other events. How many people are suffering in silence, out of sight and out of mind? Monrovia has been cut off from the outside world for almost six months now. We know that half a million Liberians are displaced within their own country. Perhaps 5,000 have been killed in the fighting (though we believe that Archbishop George Browne and his family are still safe). What is our ongoing responsibility to this partner in deep distress? Are we doing everything we can do? What more should we be doing?

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait has raised questions the likes of which we have not had to struggle with since the Vietnam War. The House of Bishops tried to deal with some of those questions in a resolution issued at the Washington

meeting. That resolution reflected the deep division in the public's opinion on the U.S. role in the Middle East.

I have myself issued a statement, which I trust you all found in the Episcopal News Service release. Response to that statement has been overwhelmingly positive--if not always in agreement on every point I made, then for the fact that I spoke out as forthrightly as I could on a matter of deep national and international concern.

The response from our partner church in the Middle East has also been entirely positive. When Bishop Samir Kafity of Jerusalem spoke at the House of Bishops meeting, I was afraid he was not being heard. Bishop Kafity refused to see the situation in simplistic terms. He called our attention to the complexity of Middle Eastern history and conflict. He would not separate the Palestinian issue from the Iraqi-Kuwaiti question. He questioned the Western powers' interest in the latter and its neglect of the former and wondered if it didn't have something to do with oil and Western lifestyles. As Professor Bellah reminded us, these are hard questions for a generation raised on cold war rhetoric and whose views of human nature are shaped less by the Bible and more by the Milton Friedman school of economics (that is, the view that sees human beings as exclusively self-interest maximizers).

In an op-ed piece for the *Washington Post*, I reflected on the church's role in public debate of the Persian Gulf crisis. I noted that the special offering of the religious community is a way of approaching the difficult questions of global conflict. We must say and keep saying: "Look at the world in ways that transcend the geopolitical. Look at the world not simply through the lens of expediency or self-interest."

While the religious community--and here I mean Jewish and Muslim as well as Christian--may not have all the answers to the problems of a Middle East or a Northern Ireland or a Central America (and who does?), the community of faith does offer a foundation upon which we may ponder the imponderables of human folly. It offers an understanding of moral discourse and the need for prayerful reflection and faithful discernment. It offers access to a wisdom that cannot be summed up in television sound bites.

What shall we say and counsel if we go to war in the Persian Gulf? Are you prepared to reflect prayerfully with me on this question, even amid all the work we already have to do at this meeting on the budget and preparations for General Convention? There are at least half a dozen Episcopal chaplains on active duty in the Persian Gulf, and who knows how many hundreds of other Episcopalians among our men and women there. They look to their church for guidance. What is our word for them?

Much in the manner of issues of sexuality, the questions raised about our nation's role in the world community by the Persian Gulf crisis and the end of the cold war will not soon go away. The questions are deeply moral ones at base, having to do not only with war and peace, but also with the stewardship and allocation of precious resources, human as well as environmental and material. I call our church to exercise its rightful and irreplaceable role in the great public debate now underway. We have much to offer when we speak from the authority of our life in Christ.

Let us, then, out of our authority, make our offerings. Surely it is not a moment too soon.

90299

Presiding Bishop's Christmas Message 1990: Recovering Christmas: What do we celebrate?

What can it mean? Red and white striped candies in the shape of little canes have appeared in the stores. Evergreen trees from tiny to towering have sprung up in vacant lots on city street corners. White-bearded men in red suits are a motif present everywhere. A frenzied spirit prevails in department stores and shopping malls. We hear songs on the radio about roasting chestnuts, while on television Frosty the Snowman cavorts once again and Rudolph and the reindeer are getting a workout. Spicy smells of cakes and cookies fill our kitchens, while visions of sugar plums dance in our heads. What can it mean?

So much of the way we prepare for and celebrate Christmas is touched with playful fantasy and wonderful make believe. Seemingly disconnected rituals can be signs and symbols of Christ's coming, as we celebrate this joyous reality with every means at hand--including trees and boxes with bows. However, let us not be confused by fantasy and make-believe. The Christmas story is true. Bethlehem is a real place, and so is Nazareth, and the Sea of Galilee, and Jerusalem. The Son of God was sent into the world at a particular place and time. He is part of history, a history that goes on and now includes each of us.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

The only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
 he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
 and was made man.

This is what we celebrate. The source of our joy in this season is the birth of love. We celebrate again the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord. We celebrate again the knowledge that God is born in us. We celebrate again knowing "how great is the love that the Father has shown to us! We were called God's children, and such we are..." [1 John 3:1].

We *are* all God's children, and God's love has been made visible in the Holy Child. From this birth of love came our new commandment, that we love one another as we have been loved. And, we don't just love those we choose to love. We love "one another," and that means everyone.

God's message of love came to us in the Middle East two millennia ago. What a painful irony it is that as we celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace his birthplace does not know peace. Surely, the wondrous Light from Light is needed now where it first shone forth. I pray this Light will guide our prayers and illuminate our understanding during these troubled times. As an act of love, let us share the peace of Christ by holding in our prayers all those in the Middle East, the whole people of God.

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus in the world and in our hearts, let us go forward as bearers of that wondrous Light, that wondrous love, to all of God's people.

May the joys and blessings of Christmas be known in each of your hearts.

Edmond L. Browning
Presiding Bishop and Primate

90300

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Message Christmas 1990

Each year I welcome this opportunity to send you my greetings and good wishes for Christmas, but this is the last Christmas letter I shall write to you all as archbishop of Canterbury. This, for me, has been a decade of discovery, a decade in which I have come to know the Anglican Communion. Each successive year has added to the number of my friends in the communion, as I have visited new places and met new people, and I shall long remember the colorful scenes and friendly faces that have come to mean so much to me.

Traditionally Christmas is a time for the family. We focus our attention on a tiny baby, with Mary his mother and Joseph, and we see in them a model for all human families. Families reunite at Christmas, and instinctively we recognize the family in all its forms as the most fundamental institution in human society.

Churches are also families. I greet you as members of the Anglican family of churches. We are related by history, common beliefs and practices, and by mutual care and affection. We cherish our family likeness.

Recently in Korea I have seen how beautifully our liturgical tradition can combine with Korean imagination and precision. Earlier this year I watched Bangladeshi grace and simplicity harmonize with Eucharistic devotion, and on many previous occasions I have seen Anglican spirituality enhanced by buoyant African enthusiasm. Anglican Christianity always seeks to root itself in local soil and clothe itself in local dress.

Diversity of membership is no threat to Anglican unity, yet during the past decade the collapse of the Anglican Communion has been regularly predicted. We do not rely on a central authority, nor claim to possess a model pattern of faith and order. Like the Orthodox, we cherish our tradition of regional autonomy, even when it puts our fellowship under strain. Diversity need not separate us.

Nor does suffering. Who can deny that the cry of the Palestinian people has brought our church in Jerusalem closer to us all? It is far more than a presence at the historic cradle of our faith. Who can deny that the events of this year have alerted us to our diocese in the Gulf? The birth pangs of a new order in Southern Africa or the dreadful conflict in Liberia--all these agonies affect our family life as surely as any doctrinal debate. The prayer for Terry Waite and his family has been for me a powerful sign of the unity of the Anglican family.

In my travels among you over the years, I have always sought to encourage our relations with other churches. I have seen for myself what Anglicans have contributed to the united churches in South Asia and among the brave Christian community in China. When I was in South America in May, it was clear to me how our small Anglican churches in Chile, Peru, and Paraguay could provide a bridge on which representatives of larger churches could meet and talk together. Anglicans ignore their vocation if they ignore other followers of Christ. We do not claim completeness; we are pilgrims together, confident in the special gifts we can offer to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

But unity is not an end in itself. All good families open their doors to nonmembers, especially to those with no home of their own. As church families, we must do so again this Christmas. We must, as families, congregations, or national churches, offer the hospitality denied to the child Jesus and his family.

Recently I visited a medical foundation in London for the victims of torture. There were people from many nations and races. There was a crowd of Kurds and there were Christians from Somalia and Uganda. It was a place where degradation and compassion, tragedy and grace, were present in equal measure. I shall treasure their words of greeting more than any Christmas present. "We are people who know very little about the archbishop of Canterbury, but we all know one thing--he is a friend of refugees."

At Christmas we rejoice in the generosity of God. In our festivities let us practice his hospitality, care for the stranger and the refugee, and in doing so, welcome Christ again into our hearts and lives.

**The Most Rev. and Right Honorable Robert A.K. Runcie
Archbishop of Canterbury**

